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T H E
Expedience, Utility, and Necessity
O F A
NEW BRIDGE,
AT OR NEAR
BLACKFRYARS;

All Objections thereto fully answered, and
the requisite Dispositions exemplified.



L O N D O N :

Printed for M. COOPER, at the Globe in Pater-
noster-Row. MDCCLVI.

[Price Sixpence.]

500 250



RECEIVED
JAN 10 1964
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
WASHINGTON, D.C.

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O F A
NEW BRIDGE.

THE reason of constructing New Bridges is usually understood to be the commodity consequent of such construction; or in a more general phrase, an easy, convenient, and safe communication for carrying on trade between one place and another; and as the more easy and safe such communication is, business will naturally be conducted with less interruption, less hazard, and less expence, so is it requisite that where such a communication can be effected with propriety, a bridge should be constructed.

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The propriety of the situation is conceived from the nature of the river over which it is to be thrown, the connection it may have with one or more great roads, public streets, or markets, and its apt communication with the respective buildings to which it relates. Out of this propriety springs the convenience, and thence the utility, expedience, and necessity. The convenience results from hence, that the present bridges are at near three miles distance from each other, consequently near one mile and a half either way to come at the center, and from either of the bridges to any further part of the town proportionably more distant. And as by the building of a New Bridge a communication will be formed between the two parallel roads on each side of the Town, so will the entrance from either be extremely convenient to every part, and its commodiousness too evident to need farther remark.

In this plain light it seems unaccountable that it should, by any men, or set of men be opposed, unless such as are as pitiful pedlars in trade as narrow in their way of thinking, who ridiculously imagine

gine they have a right to all the privileges, and all the trade of the city, which would have some appearance of candor and common sense, if they would at the same time claim a right to pay all the taxes, pave all the streets, and maintain all the poor. For as they do not chuse to consider, that a particular convenience must be ultimately a general commodity, it seems but reasonable, that they who would monopolize all the advantages, ought to bear all the burthen. This subject would bear a severer stricture than I chuse at this time to give it, as men are not in the same manner to reasoned out of what, however falsely, they imagine to be their interest, as where, only, a meer fordid stubbornness prevails.

The partiality of those who oppose the Bridge is grounded on a presumption, that when such a bridge is built, it may be the means of drawing the trade from the eastern to the western part of the city; but as experience is the guide by which we are to be directed in this enquiry, it may be necessary to shew it is not materially the case. In respect to what we most generally understand by trade, which is the citizens deal-

ing in foreign commodities, with those in the country, a New Bridge seems no reason why a country dealer should leave an old correspondent to contract new acquaintance; which seldom happens but when the reason is of a different kind, and has no relation to the commodity of a New Bridge: besides that where the wharfs are appropriate by law, and the custom-house, &c. established, that part, with suited conduct, will always hold their trade, and maintain it against every other part of the town, were twenty bridges constructed; and this is so evident to all who are but minutely acquainted with the course of business, as not to need any farther illustration. But suppose it otherwise, what is it to the purpose? is there any rule of right, of law, or of reason, that one street, lane, or district should arbitrarily command the trade of the city, and direct whether the rest shall thrive and flourish or not? It is a presumption a little too high, to dictate to their fellow-citizens, whether they shall or not improve their situation, by more convenient and commodious communications, and this too only from a fordid partiality,

tiality, that has no foundation in nature or truth, as shall be shewn in proper place; and therefore whether it be ignorance, or partiality, or both, that attempts to obstruct a common benefit, it is equally to be disregarded.

In respect to carriages that come to town laden with goods, and return freighted home, they must come the nearest way to where those who employ them direct, and where the situation is most proper for them to deliver, and receive their respective loadings; therefore, where the principal employers deal in the eastern part of the city, to the inns there must the carriages come, whatever bridge they go over, or by whatever way they enter the town: and thus we see that the coming over Westminster-bridge, or in at Piccadilly, they still must drive to that part most adapted to their loadings; and it is to be hoped that the traders of the eastern division are not concerned that the carriages by coming in different ways, occasions the streets about them to be less incommoded; or that one part of the town is subject to the chief in-commodity, and the other reaps the main profit; and
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this convenience improving to themselves, by the more openings, and nearer ways of entry from the western and southern parts of the kingdom; they must come into the heart of the city, if their business is there, and the easier they attain the end of their journey, it is the common benefit of all who are interested. Thus are the eastern division reasoning against themselves, and their own obvious interest, unless it seem to them that the vending of some few trifles, half a score almanacks, or a dozen of whipcord, are to balance against the waste of pavements, the weight of the land-tax, and general utility.

But surely it is no uncommon thing to see that one part of a town may improve, without detriment to the other; on the contrary, the most common observation is, that trade improves with the number of traders, for as most of our trade depends on vanity and luxury, or what passes usually under those terms, it is equally true that while people can find money, the more temptations that lie in their way, the more they will expend; and why the eastern envy should blast the western prosperity, without

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any kind of benefit to themselves, nay even to their own injury, I shall leave their wisdoms to explain to the public satisfaction.

That there will be more carriages come over the New Bridge than would have come into the city, if that were not built, few in their senses doubt, as nothing but the inconvenience of London Bridge prevents many more passing that way. That bridge is a kind of barricade to the trade of the city, and in its present state must always so be; but was a fine open inlet made, would it not be an eligible road, to those who inhabit the Inns of Court, Bloomsbury, Holborn, Hatton-garden, &c.? Therefore such going over a New Bridge no detriment to the eastern division; nor can it be supposed of any ill consequence that gentlemen have convenient houses in open squares near Fleet-street; it rather seems to me an infatuation in the citizens, that they had not thought of this many years past, that they did not think it better to lessen their quotas of land-tax, by having that part of the town filled with gentlemen, than to increase it by the entertainment of thieves and beggars,

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That whole body of miserable ruins on the back of Fleet-street, between that and Holborn on the one side, and between the other and the Thames, and so again from each side of Ludgate, is a woeful instance of the ingenuity, honesty, and sagacity of those who will dictate to their fellow-citizens where, how, and in what part of the city they shall trade; not content with all the public offices, trading companies, and custom-house, with a wholesale trade established, and almost unalterable; they would hinder their fellow-citizens' acquiring a few good neighbours, and a little retail business, which is the most that part of the city can pretend to obtain, at the same time so blinded by mistaken self-interest, as not to perceive that the introduction of a thousand new inhabitants would be in some measure their own profit.

The numbers of people obliged to go over London or Westminster-Bridge, that have no kind of connection with the trade of either parts of the town, would, by a serious mind be rather considered as a nuisance than as a benefit, and a singular incumbrance on their trade, especially

as to London bridge, where by its narrowness, and of the streets adjacent, those whom trade doth not call that way that would go any other more convenient, and with less risque of their lives, contribute materially to block up the passages and impede that very trade the Eastern division are so sollicitous about, and at the same time to ruin their pavements, which is indeed the least part of the matter, as it is beside attended with an evident inconvenience, as such passengers are often by necessity obliged to obstruct a free way to the tradesmens shops, from before which there is no removing them untill proper opportunity presents; and whenever the present bridge shall be made wider and more commodious, it will but partially answer the purpose, at an expence, and loss perhaps much superior to the convenience.

There is another point which I think hath not hitherto been remark'd, which is, that where the nature of the city trade makes it absolutely necessary for the country waggons or other carriages to pass to and from the Southern counties to Warwick-lane, Newgate-market, &c. they must come

over one of the present bridges, and which ever it be, have near two miles to pass on the stones without any benefit to the vicinage of either of those bridges, but rather to their detriment, both as to their pavements and interruption of such whose business especially calls them either of those ways; yet must they, as such call makes it requisite, at present submit to the inconvenience: and this common interruption of the trading part, added to that of people who are entirely unconcern'd in trade, makes perhaps the best half of the passengers who go over either of the bridges: but how this can be any benefit to the neighbourhood of those bridges is not easy to be conceiv'd; and it is still more difficult to find out, upon what principles of right reason or common sense, the Fleet, Newgate, and Honey-lane Markets, should not have as free a communication with the country as any other, and why not even Clare-Market as either of them? For, suppose it may be the interest of the Eastern and Western vicinity to command all the passages over the river, which seems plainly not their interest, would it be common justice

justice to deny the same advantage to the other branches of both cities? when it is plain that one end has already all the preference the court can give, and the other all the advantage that commerce can furnish, and when those who are most likely to make the center flourish, cannot be presumed to benefit any other part. As such who are attach'd to the Inns of Court and other avocations, must reside with their families near to where their business makes it requisite, and then, will it injure either of the extremes that such as are now obliged to submit to various inconveniencies for want of better, shall decently supply the spaces, where those shelter who are a terror to the town, a dishonour to the city, and the disgrace of government?

Thus far we have spoke as to what respects the convenience of the river, seemingly intended by nature to benefit equally those who reside on its banks. I shall now turn to another consideration, which is a free communication with the North side, not separated as the South by a navigable stream, but in effect barricaded out by one continued run of ruins, or what perhaps

is worse, the dangerous harbour of profligates. This, we presume, none of the advocates for either of the present bridges have any concern in, and we see it is plainly the opinion of the government, that the communication between one part of the town and the other should be made as commodious as possible; for which purpose a common road is directed on the back of the buildings; but it would be still more commodious if one or more roads from the principal streets intersected it at right angles, especially if that may at the same time be an advantage to trade, and enrich, beautify, and ennoble the town, in what part soever it appear'd requisite, and could be done without real prejudice to private property. It may hence be remark'd, that the improvement will grow upon us when we extend this commodiousness over the river to the South road, and this communication formed by means of a New Bridge and a line pursued from one road to the other over it, without injury to any, as there is hardly one house of any consequence in the whole proposed tract, and where any is they may be replaced to more advantage.

vantage. This would give quite a new air to the town, and furnish out a variety of advantages that may not be any other way procured.

It may perhaps be the opinion of many, that this is meerly a scheme to benefit one part of the city at the expence of the whole, presuming, that money to answer all the proposed purposes of this New Bridge and the necessary openings, must be raised in common. However this may be, it is in the breast of the legislature to act as may appear to them most agreeable to justice; but it may be here observed, that they themselves propose the very same thing, if they would enlarge or rebuild London bridge, as may probably happen; and then, how would the Eastern division reason, when the Western shall be equally charg'd? Hence we see the weakness of partial argument, and to what poor resources those are reduced who are so attach'd to self-interest, as not to distinguish it from reason and rectitude.

If one had place here, without breaking into the connection of the argument, to enquire who, what rank of the citizens they

they are, and what number oppose this salutary design, it would perhaps astonish the legislature to find that the petition was obtained with great labour and industry, false reasonings, ill-founded and wild conjectures of consequences that have no existence in nature, reason, or common sense, supporting a sort of argument with as ridiculous suggestions as those formerly made against Westminster bridge, and condemning their own reasons to-day by the very opposite to-morrow. First, supposing a New Bridge would impede the current and overflow the town, next that building a New Bridge where the old one now is, or opening the arches would let all the water run away, and leave the river dry; then that a New Bridge more open and clear, would raise sands and shoals, but an old bridge more confined in the spaces carry them all off. Thus involving themselves in evident contradictions, and thus by playing on the feeble faculties of some, and the weak heads of others, they make up the sum total of a partial opposition. But this kind of reasoning will be less wonderful, when it appears that even some, seemingly

wise

wise men and of consequence in commerce, have at certain times asserted, that was London bridge arches opened, the Custom-house, India-house, &c. the stated wharfs and shipping, would swim through, and carry with them all the trade up to Westminster.

We see by this to what an extreme of ill-grounded argument, even the face of particular interests will carry venal minded men, not perceiving how intimately public good is connected with private interest; and when this is not considered, had not the whole nation more reason to complain of bearing part in the building of Westminster bridge, than any part of the city of London can pretend to have in respect to the bridge proposed? They may likewise, if they please, consider a certain fact, which is, that in the proportioning the land-tax that the wards, the two Farringdons, and other Western wards pay greatly more than the parliament assessment, when the Eastern wards are not charged with near their rents. I hope they who pay so little do not imagine that it is not in the parliament's power to remedy this disproportion;

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portion; and should that happen, which is more than probable, from the justice and candor of that august assembly, it will then appear whether it be best to contribute to the building of the Bridge, or to pay the land-tax equally; a moment's reflection will convince these opposers that the difference is infinite, and therefore calls upon the more wealthy and important traders to check the ridiculous pertinacity of those little dealers under their support and influence, who are aiming to throw an expence upon them that would build many bridges.

But there is a consideration in honour, in friendship, and good will to our fellow-creatures, that to the wise and affluent should have some weight, though perhaps, not immediately balancing against partial views: if the merchants, and men of candor, would but take the trouble to inspect the miserable estate of the western wards, I am more than persuaded, from their generous conduct on other occasions, that they would; at their own expence, build the Bridge in question, as it is of more consequence to retrieve persons from distress,

trials than to provide for the indigent; nor need men in trade be inform'd that the giving of spirit to industry is the best means of preserving men from indigence. They have an example before them of a gentleman who has constructed one bridge at his own expence, and has publicly offered to subscribe to this; but the merchants of London need no example, nor can it be supposed that the example given is attended with any private views.

If the opposition is charged with partial allurements, they return it on those who desire a bridge, which no doubt is true in part, but the partialities are in no sense similar; the one proposes to improve the town for their own and for the common benefit, the other to impede all improvement, on a bare supposition that they may in some minute respects be thereby detrimented; the one proposes a private interest only, the other as connected with public utility. It was on this pitiful principle of private interest only that London was prevented from being universally improved after the great fire, and instead of becoming a fine, beautiful, and commodious city,

is a picture of irregularity and confusion ; the consequence has been that even the merchants were forced out, and a new city has rose on its ruins, the natural effects of an obstinate, perverse, and narrow conduct.

In truth this opposition is more founded on ignorance than on any plausible motive. I remember an instance something to the present purpose, when it was first proposed to make the river Nene navigable up to the town of Northampton, a man more distinguished for volubility of speech than meaning in what he said, by an infinite concatenation of nothings, so charmed the mob of the city of Peterborough, that they were firmly persuaded the carrying of the navigation beyond them would ruin their trade, under which conjecture they painfully labour'd, until the direct contrary appeared ; ~~when~~ they consoled themselves with wisely wondering how they came to be such fools. After this they found out another thing that was going to run away with their trade ; this was the building a bridge about two miles above them on the same river ; but yet their trade increased ;
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this, upon the back of the other, so puzzled their narrow understandings, that they at last concluded to leave all future undertakings of a public nature to men of better sense than themselves.

It is very singularly remarkable on the present occasion, that those in the opposition act in disguise, ashamed of what they so ardently pursue; there are few can tell either who they are; and when found, they deny their conduct. It is a sufficient sign of a bad cause, that the advocates cannot bear the light; like moles they labour under-ground, and if chance brings them into sun-shine, they dread the pointed rays, and vanish.

But to leave that which is less, for what is more material, the UTILITY of this Bridge may be considered in an extensive, its NECESSITY in a more confined light; and the EXPEDIENCY as resulting from both. The UTILITY is common, and general to all people, whom either business or pleasure brings into, carries out of, or passes through from one road to the other, and an equal convenience to either end of this extended mass of buildings, when it is most

proper to enter into the center from either road, preserving each way, half the common range of pavement; and it is very well observed in a paper I have seen published on this occasion, " That it will be
 " found very difficult for those who oppose
 " a public benefit, because it includes a
 " private advantage, to assign any better
 " principle of their conduct, than that of
 " the envious man in the fable:" There being nothing more notorious than that every public benefit necessarily includes private interest, and usually extends farther, than short-sighted, and partial men, suddenly perceive.

I shall not say any thing here of what regards the repair of London-Bridge, or rather the widening of it, as the making it more commodious, or the offering so to do, only shews that more convenience is requisite.

It does not in the least concern the present question, that the city once opposed Fulham and Westminster-Bridges being built, nor the seeming inconsistency with the present plan, as it only shews, they are so much less in the road of nonsense than
 before ;

before; and which approach towards wisdom is very much for their honour. They have only now to remember, that their idle suggestions about rising floods, pent up streams, and accumulating sand-banks, are by experience shewn to have been meer visionary whims, springing from the indigested imaginations of men totally strangers to science, incapable of either perceiving by what means a stream is quickened on the outfal, or of what the consequence would be if the sands were precipitated Below-Bridge.

I have therefore only left to observe, that as the chief dependence of this part of the town is on very different avocations from that of the other, and can in no sense concern them, whether a New Bridge be or be not constructed, so neither any objections they have, or can make, ought in the least to be regarded, unless they can make it plainly appear, that they will thereby be essentially injured, and such injury a super-balance to the public utility; and am apprehensive, that considering the miserable state of the obscure places above-mentioned, and the little benefit they are
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at present, either to the house or ground-landlord, that improvements judiciously made, may answer more important purposes, than at first sight seems apparent, besides giving a beauty, and airyness to this part of the town, eminently contributing at the same time, to health, utility, and lustre.



F I N I S.

